

## Chapter 2: Planning Process

### 2 Documenting the Planning Process

Documentation of the planning process, including public involvement, is required to meet FEMA's DMA 2000 (44CFR§201.4(c)(1) and §201.6(c)(1)). This section includes a description of the planning process used to develop this plan, including how it was prepared, who was involved in the process, and how all of the involved agencies participated.

#### 2.1 *Description of the Planning Process*

The Washington County Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan was developed through a collaborative process involving all of the organizations and agencies detailed in Section 1.0 of this document. The County's local coordinator and the Washington County Emergency Services Director contacted these organizations directly to invite their participation and schedule meetings of the planning committee. The planning process included 5 distinct phases which were in some cases sequential (step 1 then step 2) and in some cases intermixed (step 4 completed though out the process):

1. **Collection of Data** about the extent and periodicity of wildfires in and around Washington County. This included an area encompassing Adams, Gem, Payette, Valley, and Washington Counties to insure a robust dataset for making inferences about fires in Washington County specifically; this included a wildfire extent and ignition profile.
2. **Field Observations and Estimations** about wildfire risks including fuels assessments, juxtaposition of structures and infrastructure to wildland fuels, access, and potential treatments by trained wildfire specialists.
3. **Mapping** of data relevant to wildfire control and treatments, structures, resource values, infrastructure, fire prone landscapes, and related data.
4. **Facilitation of Public Involvement** from the formation of the planning committee, to a public mail survey, news releases, public meetings, public review of draft documents, and acceptance of the final plan by the signatory representatives.
5. **Analysis and Drafting of the Report** to integrate the results of the planning process, providing ample review and integration of committee and public input, followed by acceptance of the final document.

##### 2.1.1 The Planning Team

Planning efforts were led by the Project Director, Dr. William E. Schlosser, of Northwest Management, Inc., Mr. Izatt, the Washington County Fire Plan Coordinator, and John McGee, also of Northwest Management, Inc. They led a team of resource professionals that included fire mitigation specialists, wildfire control specialists, resource management professionals, and hazard mitigation experts.

The planning team met with many residents of the county during the inspections of communities, infrastructure, and hazard abatement assessments. This methodology, when coupled with the other approaches in this process, worked adequately to integrate a wide spectrum of observations and interpretations about the project.

The planning philosophy employed in this project included the open and free sharing of information with interested parties. Information from federal and state agencies was integrated

into the database of knowledge used in this project. Meetings with the committee were held throughout the planning process to facilitate a sharing of information between cooperators.

When the public meetings were held, many of the committee members were in attendance and shared their support and experiences with the planning process and their interpretations of the results.

## **2.2 Public Involvement**

Public involvement in this plan was made a priority from the inception of the project. There were a number of ways that public involvement was sought and facilitated. In some cases this led to members of the public providing information and seeking an active role in protecting their own homes and businesses, while in other cases it led to the public becoming more aware of the process without becoming directly involved in the planning process.

The public's involvement in this planning process was peaked during the public meetings held in October 2003. A few members of the public viewed the development of a Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan as a negative event, aimed at circumventing public law to remove or limit private property rights. Their comments were heard during the public meeting held in Weiser, at the Commissioner's Office. Newspaper reports summarizing their concerns described a planning process "*conducted in stealth*" and part of a larger effort by a multi-national consortium to take away property rights and even property from the residents of Washington County and the rest of Idaho. Although these allegations were baseless, the planning committee invited representatives of this group to join the planning committee at the monthly planning meetings.

Their input was welcomed and encouraged as this planning process continued. The following news report appeared in the Weiser Signal American, a weekly publication serving Weiser and the rest of Washington County.

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### **Landowners eye fire plan with suspicion**

by David Trigueiro

The Washington County Board of Commissioners spent the last hour of its weekly meeting Monday attempting to assuage the fears of several landowners that the Washington County Fire Mitigation Plan will infringe on their property rights.

Ron Pound, Esther Smith, Loraine Carr, and two other local landowners requested the meeting to air their concerns that the plan would lead to more government regulation and control over how their land is used. They all accused the commissioners of instituting the plan by stealth.

Pound accused one of the plan's designers of giving people false hope of great growth to come in the cattle and logging industries to gain favor. "The Forest Service has no intention of having more cattle and logging. He just said it. But people are taking it as a guarantee, and we know it's not going to happen," Pound said.

Smith exclaimed it is part of an intricate plot by the Sirolli Institute, a private economic development corporation currently under contract with Washington and Adams counties, "to get you to sacrifice your family and your job and give all your land to Sirolli" with the backing of "all our boys back in Washington (D.C.)..."

The fire plan, explained Commission Chairman Diana Thomas, did begin in Washington, D.C., as part of an effort by Congress to reduce the cost of range and forest fires that have ravaged populated areas of the Southwest in recent years. Particularly fires last year in Colorado and a massive fire this year in southern California that destroyed more than 1,000 homes and killed more than 20 people.

Money was made available to states and counties to develop plans to prevent and control destructive wildfires with special emphasis on forest and range lands where homes are being built. The plan would use predictive models identifying where fires are likely to start and which of those locations would see fire spread most rapidly.

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Washington County set up a coordinating team headed by Weiser resident and firefighter Keith Izatt and retained Northwest Management Inc., to provide risk assessments, mapping, field inspections, conduct interviews and collaborate with the committee in preparing the Washington County Fire Mitigation Plan.

Public meetings were held in Cambridge and Weiser the first week of October to discuss the plan. Last Thursday, Nov. 20, another public meeting was held in Weiser to review a draft plan submitted by Northwest Management. The public was invited to attend and ask questions regarding the proposed plan.

When Pound demanded to know if the commissioners intended to gather "any input from landowners," Thomas brought up the open meeting last Thursday and asked if he had attended. "I was there," Pound replied. "You didn't get the feeling there was going to be any input. There hasn't been any public notice. They said they were forming a committee. That was the last I heard."

"But you were there Thursday night, Ron," interjected Commissioner Rick Michael.

"Yes, I was there," Pound replied, "but we didn't know anything about what this plan was. All we had was rumors. If we hadn't hollered there probably wouldn't have been any notice [of the meeting]. As far as the fire plan, why did we have to hire these people (Northwest Management)? We have four fire chiefs and a disaster coordinator in the county. Couldn't they have put this plan together?"

Thomas explained that the fire chiefs did not feel they had the time to do the work and were not certain they had the necessary background to carry it out. Thus, the county brought in professionals.

Michael noted that Northwest [Management] recommended grazing and logging as some of the best ways to keep grasses down and the forest clear of undergrowth in order to suppress fire outbreaks.

Pound replied it is "uncalled for to give people those kind of hopes. This has been a fiasco from the start. I was told by a county employee there would be no building because of the fire damage. I can see the point of making people keep the brush away from their house, but the fact is, all the fire guards in the world won't stop a range fire unless the wind is just right. I don't like to see outsiders come in as experts. They take some project cut and dried out of a book that doesn't necessarily abide by the life-style of the community."

Commissioner Roy Mink said there was nothing in the plan about regulating building on range and forest lands, nor was any regulation contemplated by the plan. He showed Pound a pamphlet distributed by mail to every resident by Northwest Management giving them information about the danger of wildfires and how to protect their homes and buildings. It was addressed to "Resident," he noted, meaning that a copy must have gone to every mailing address in the area. The object was simply to inform as many people as possible about fire control and protection.

Loraine Carr pointed out to the commissioners that all the federal and state agencies involved had the word "management" in their title Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The grants offered, she said, were "bribery and blackmail" devised "to get access to our private land for management. When you accept government money, you let them in to control your land."

Smith, backed by Pound and Carr, asserted that at least "three quarters of the money" for the national fire mitigation came from the Sirolli Institute and its major shareholder Earnesto Sirolli who is "out to control the world" from his base in South Africa.

The commissioners asked Smith how and where the Sirolli Institute, which sells economic development promotion packages to local governments based on their successful programs in Australia and South Africa, is connected to wildfire mitigation.

Smith read out a portion of the Sirolli Institute's mission statement: "Ultimately, the benefit of our work is designed to reach passionate individuals in a manner that will assist them to transform their dreams and talents into meaningful and rewarding work thereby realizing our vision."

"Look, they say our vision!" Smith pointed out. She noted that Washington County Disaster Services Coordinator Steve Domby had used similar wording in reference to the wildfire mitigation plan, saying the county would have to first clear a few hurdles.

"That's what they say, jump over your hurdles, slaughter your family and give all your land to Sirolli," Smith concluded.

Clearly confused, Chairman Thomas looked elsewhere among the protestors for more light. Lloyd Roberts said he was not familiar with the Sirolli Institute, but did have some concerns of his own to present.

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Roberts said he simply did not understand why the plan was necessary. "Let me tell you this. I have an insurance agent come out every year. He pointed out the weeds were all cut down around the buildings and said that was the way it should be. I asked him what would happen if they weren't cut down and he said, We would not insure you. It seems pretty simple to me. I think it s a private matter, not something for the government to get involved in."

Thomas replied that the plan simply coordinates the efforts of fire prevention and suppression agencies. No county money is involved. Michael repeated there is no regulatory aspect to the plan.

"Is it going to increase our taxes?" Roberts asked bluntly.

All of the commissioners replied they knew of no way the Washington County Wildfire Mitigation Plan could have any effect on taxes.

Roberts said his taxes "have gone up 60 percent in 35 years" and made the point that county government is costing too much, especially in a time when farm incomes are falling or static.

Rex Winegar, who also denied any knowledge of the Sirolli connection espoused by Smith and Pound, pointed out what seemed an inconsistency in BLM policy. He said the BLM has offered to buy rangeland from him and take it out of grazing. And yet, in the fire mitigation plan, the BLM is apparently advocating grazing rangeland as a form of fire control.

The commissioners, too, had no explanation for this apparent inconsistency.

**--WEISER SIGNAL AMERICAN**

**11/26/03**

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## 2.2.1 News Releases

Under the auspices of the Washington County Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Planning Committee, news releases were submitted to area news papers and radio (there are no local television companies servicing this county).

### 2.2.1.1 Newspaper Articles

Committee and public meeting announcements were published in the local newspaper ahead of each meeting. The following are examples of newspaper announcements that ran in the local newspaper (*WEISER SIGNAL AMERICAN*).

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## NOTICE

### Washington County Fire Plan Public Meetings

October 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 pm at the Washington County Fairgrounds exhibition building in Cambridge

October 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 pm in the County Commissioners Chambers in the Washington County Court House in Weiser

### Wildfire Mitigation Plan Project

The Washington County Fire Mitigation Plan Committee has been created to complete a Fire Mitigation Plan for Washington County as part of the National Fire Plan authorized by congress and the Whitehouse. The Washington County Fire Mitigation Plan will include risk analysis at the community level with predictive models for where fires are likely to ignite and where they are likely to spread rapidly once ignited. The local coordinator for this effort is Keith Izatt of Weiser.

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Northwest Management, Inc. has been retained by the county to provide risk assessments, mapping, field inspections, interviews, and to collaborate with the committee to prepare the plan. The coordinating team includes rural and wildland fire districts, land managers, elected officials, and others. Northwest Management specialists will conduct an analysis of fire prone landscapes and make recommendations for potential treatments. Specific fuel modification activities for homes and structures will be proposed as part of the analysis.

The planning team will be conducting Public Meetings to discuss preliminary findings and to seek public involvement in the planning process.

For more information on the Fire Mitigation Plan project in Washington County contact your County Commissioner, Northwest Management, Inc. project director Dr. William Schlosser (208) 883-4488, or the Fire Mitigation Plan Coordinator Keith Izatt at 208-707-1416.

## **NOTICE**

### **Washington County Fire Plan Committee Meeting**

Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm  
Vendome Events Center  
Weiser, Idaho

The purpose of this meeting is to allow the committee members an opportunity to review the draft plan that will be submitted by Northwest Management. The public is invited, and will given an opportunity after the presentation to ask questions regarding the proposed plan.

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## **2.2.2 Public Mail Survey**

In order to collect a broad base of perceptions about wildland fire and individual risk factors of homeowners in Washington County, a mail survey was conducted. Using a database of landowners provided by the Washington County Assessor, homeowners from the Wildland-Urban Interface surrounding each community were identified. They were included in a database

of names that integrated individuals living on parcels with a home, at least 3 acres of land, and a mailing address within Washington County. This database created a list of 5,522 names to which was affixed a random number that contributed to the probability of being selected for the public mail survey. A total of 212 landowners meeting the above criteria were selected.

The public mail survey developed for this project has been used in the past by Northwest Management, Inc., during the execution of other WUI Wildfire Mitigation Plans. The survey used The Total Design Method (Dillman 1978) as a model to schedule the timing and content of letters sent to the selected recipients. Copies of each cover letter, mail survey, and communication are included in Appendix III.

The first in the series of mailing was sent August 7, 2003, and included a cover letter, a survey, and an offer of receiving a custom GIS map of the area of their selection in Washington County if they would complete and return the survey. The free map incentive was tied into assisting their community and helping their interests by participating in this process. Each letter also informed residents about the planning process. A return self-addressed envelope, was included in each packet. A postcard reminder was sent to the non-respondents on August 20, 2003, encouraging their response. A final mailing, with a revised cover letter pleading with them to participate, was sent to non-respondents on September 2, 2003.

Surveys were returned during the months of August, September, October, and early November. A total of 113 residents responded to the survey. Two of the surveys were returned as undeliverable. The effective response rate for this survey was 53%. Statistically, this response rate allows the interpretation of all of the response variables significantly at the 99% confidence level.

### **2.2.2.1 Survey Results**

A summary of the survey's results will be presented here and then referred back to during the ensuing discussions on the need for various treatments, education, and other information.

All of the respondents have a home in Washington County, with approximately 95% of the respondents completing the survey considering this their primary residence (i.e., 5% completed the survey for a Washington County residence that is not their primary residence). About 55% of the respondents were from the Weiser area, 22% were from the Cambridge Area, 12% were from the Midvale area, and the remainder were from a variety of other areas in the county totaling 11% of all responses.

Virtually all (98%) of the respondents correctly identified that they have emergency telephone 911 services in their area.

Not all home owners correctly identified if their home was protected by a rural or city fire district. Overall, 94% of the respondents reported their home protected by a rural or city fire district. Of these respondents, about 17% indicated they do live in a fire district, when in fact they do not. The remaining 83% of homeowners reporting protection from rural and city fire districts were correct.

Only 6% of respondents reported no rural or city fire district coverage. Of these households, approximately 35% (2% of the total) reported incorrectly as records indicate they are in a protected area. The remaining 65% of these respondents (4% of the total) reporting no structural fire protection were correct in this assessment. Only 1 respondent reported they were unsure of their fire protection status.

Respondents were asked to indicate the type of roofing material covering the main structure of their home. The majority of the respondents, 54% indicated their homes were covered with

aluminum, tin, or other metal. About 36% indicated their home were covered with a composite roofing material. Only 6% of the respondents indicated they have a wooden roofing material such as shakes; these are the homes at the greatest risk to roof ignition during a wildfire. The remaining 4% of respondents indicated other roofing materials were used.

Residents were asked to evaluate the proximity of trees within certain distances of their homes. Often, the density of trees around a home is an indicator of increased fire risk. The results are presented in Table 1.1

**Table 1.1 Survey responses indicating the proximity of trees to homes.**

<b>Number of Trees</b>	<b>Within 250 feet of your home</b>	<b>Within 75 feet of your home</b>
None	50%	65%
Less than 10	39%	29%
Between 10 and 25	11%	6%
More than 25	0%	0%

Approximately 88% of those returning the survey indicated they have a lawn surrounding their home. Of these individual home sites, 99% indicated they keep this lawn green through the fire season.

The average driveway length of the respondents was approximately 1/5 mile long (1,000 feet), from their main road to their parking area. Roughly 7% of the respondents had a driveway over 1/2 mile long, and a corresponding 26% had a driveway over 1/4 of a mile long. Of these homes, roughly 63% have turnouts allowing two vehicles to pass each other in the case of emergency. Approximately 79% of all homeowners indicated they have an alternative escape route, with the remaining 21% indicating only one-way-in and one-way-out.

Nearly all respondents indicated they have some type of tools to use against a wildfire that threatens their home. Table 1.2 summarizes these responses.

**Table 1.2. Percent of homes with indicated fire fighting tools in Washington County.**

99% – Hand tools (shovel, Pulaski, etc.)
29% – Portable water tank
12% – Stationery water tank
43% – Pond, lake, or stream water supply close
29% – Water pump and fire hose
42% – Equipment suitable for creating fire breaks (bulldozer, cat, skidder, etc.)

Roughly 31% of the respondents in Washington County indicated they have someone in their household trained in wildland fire fighting. Approximately 26% indicated someone in the household had been trained in structural fire fighting. However, it is important to note that these questions did not specify a standard nor did it refer to how long ago the training was received.

A couple of questions in the survey related to on-going fire mitigation efforts households may be implementing. Respondents were asked if they conduct a periodic fuels reduction program near their home sites, such as grass or brush burning. Approximately 64% answered affirmative to this question, while 66% responded that livestock (cattle, horses, sheep) graze the grasses and forbs around their homes.

Respondents were asked to complete a fuel hazard rating worksheet to assess their home's fire risk rating. An additional column titled "results" has been added to the table, showing the percent of respondents circling each rating (Table 1.3).

**Circle the ratings in each category that best describes your home.**

Table 1.3. Fuel Hazard Rating Worksheet		Rating	Results
<b>Fuel Hazard</b>	Small, light fuels (grasses, forbs, weeds, shrubs)	1	77%
	Medium size fuels (brush, large shrubs, small trees)	2	20%
	Heavy, large fuels (woodlands, timber, heavy brush)	3	3%
<b>Slope Hazard</b>	Mild slopes (0-5%)	1	75%
	Moderate slope (6-20%)	2	15%
	Steep Slopes (21-40%)	3	9%
	Extreme slopes (41% and greater)	4	1%
<b>Structure Hazard</b>	Noncombustible roof and noncombustible siding materials	1	44%
	Noncombustible roof and combustible siding material	3	1%
	Combustible roof and noncombustible siding material	7	55%
	Combustible roof and combustible siding materials	10	0%
<b>Additional Factors</b>	Rough topography that contains several steep canyons or ridges	+2	Average -2.17 pts
	Areas having history of higher than average fire occurrence	+3	
	Areas exposed to severe fire weather and strong winds	+4	
	Areas with existing fuel modifications or usable fire breaks	-3	
	Areas with local facilities (water systems, rural fire districts, dozers)	-3	

#### Calculating your risk

Values below are the average response value to each question.

$$\begin{array}{rcl}
 \text{Fuel hazard} & \underline{1.25} & \times \text{Slope Hazard} \quad \underline{1.36} = \underline{1.7} \\
 \text{Structural hazard} & + & \underline{3.55} \\
 \text{Additional factors} & (+ \text{ or } -) & \underline{-2.17} \\
 \text{Total Hazard Points} & = & \underline{3.08}
 \end{array}$$

**Table 1.4. Percent of respondents in each risk category as determined by the survey respondents.**

00% – Extreme Risk = 26 + points  
 02% – High Risk = 16–25 points  
 20% – Moderate Risk = 6–15 points  
 78% – Low Risk = 6 or less points

Maximum household rating form score was 20 points, as assessed by the homeowners.



Finally, respondents were asked “if offered in your area, would members of your household attend a free, or low cost, one-day training seminar designed to teach homeowners in the wildland–urban interface how to improve the defensible space surrounding your home and adjacent outbuildings?” Almost half of respondents, 46% indicated a desire to participate in this type of training.

Homeowners were also asked, “Would you be interested in participating in a cost share program that would pay a portion of the costs of implementing fire risk projects on your property?” To this question, only 29% indicated a willingness to do so. It has been pointed out that some landowners may have interpreted this question and responded with the intention of indicating they would be willing to pay 100% of the costs themselves, or none of the costs themselves, relying on a 100% federal, state, or grant payment to make the treatments happen. Because this vastly differing interpretation of the same question, further elucidation of this response should not be made.

### **2.2.3 Committee Meetings**

The Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Planning Committee held formal meetings on the following dates:

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#### **September 2, 2003**

**Agenda from the Meeting:** The progress on the fire mitigation plan continued through August, 2003. Specific activities have included:

- GIS data has been collected and summarized for Washington County,
- Fire Prone Landscapes have been estimated and have gone through field review internally. Sample maps are available for review.
- Field visits by NMI fire personnel have been conducted with community evaluations completed in and around the county.
- Resources and Capabilities Data has been collected from Rural and Wildland Fire Fighting agencies. Some data still needs to be obtained, the fire season is hampering the collection of data, but it will be forth coming,
- Public surveys were sent to 212 landowners in Washington County on August 7. A post Card reminder was sent on August 20. The final mailing went out on September 2.
- Fire Mitigation Projects are being developed for specific areas, and for general county wide recommendations. These will be made available to committee members for review prior to the community meetings.
- Keith Izatt working with NMI has set dates for the public meetings
- Items to be completed in the near-term:
- Committee members with information that should be included in the County’s Fire Mitigation Plan should convey this information to William E. Schlosser as soon as possible to make sure we incorporate as much detail at this point as possible. Ideas include where risk is located, on-going mitigation projects in the county, limiting factors that would logically be incorporated into the plan (policy, planning and zoning), and other opportunities we can incorporate.

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## November 20, 2003

**Agenda from the Meeting:** The progress on the fire mitigation plan continues through November, 2003. Specific activities have included:

**Public meetings** were held in Cambridge (Oct 1) and Weiser (Oct 2) to present the Fire Mitigation Planning process. Both were well attended and facilitated lively discussion.

**Follow-up item:** NMI needs the written summaries of the meetings from the local coordinator to integrate them into the draft FMP.

**Rural Fire District Maps:** there has been some discussion about the accuracy of the Rural Fire District maps. John McGee of NMI has a map at this meeting with sections lines on it to facilitate verification of the boundaries. Each fire district should review these lines and make any corrections on the map boundary. We have some corrections in hand, but a couple of the corrections are conflicting with each other. Once the changes are made, John will deliver the revised map to Bill Schlosser in Moscow for final corrections.

**Resources and Capabilities:** John McGee has a summary of the data provided by the Rural Fire Districts. Please read and verify the accuracy of the data, look for missing data and please complete changes ASAP so that this data can be integrated into the final plan.

**USFS Projects:** We have the hard copy map Monty Herd delivered at the last meeting (thank you!) but still need that same data in GIS format if possible. Please confirm if it is available.

**Cadastral Data:** Although we talked about it at the last meeting, NMI has not received detailed landowner ownership data in GIS format from the Washington County Assessor's Office. Please copy it to a CD and forward it on to NMI so that the Draft FMP can include this information.

**Public surveys** were sent to 212 landowners in Washington County. Thus far we have received 113 completed surveys for a response rate of 53%. We still receive about 1 per week, but expect that what we have now is all we are going to get.

**High Tension Powerlines:** We are working with Idaho Power to get the existing and proposed lines in GIS format for inclusion in this project as a significant infrastructure resource.

### **Items to be completed in the near-term:**

Committee members with information that should be included in the County's Fire Mitigation Plan should convey this information to William E. Schlosser as soon as possible to make sure we incorporate as much detail at this point as possible. Ideas include where risk is located, on-going mitigation projects in the county, limiting factors that would logically be incorporated into the plan (policy, planning and zoning), and other opportunities we can incorporate.

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## January 23, 2004

### **Meeting Notes:**

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 11 at the Vendome in Weiser at 1:00PM.

### **Maps - 15 minutes to review and comments:**

Commissioner Roy Mink – question on wildfire location map. Knows of one missing near his residence.

Monte Hurd: Has info on three fires not on map: Advent Gulch 1990, Pearl Fire, and Cuddy Fires 1994. Contact him for info.

Land Ownership Map: not up-to-date, State to BLM exchange not on map.

Wildland Fire District Map – would like to see the rural fire district boundaries overlaid on this map.

Infrastructure Map – Commissioner Ray sketched in new power line to be constructed this summer by Idaho Power.

### **Resource and Capabilities Guide:**

Weiser City Fire Department - was sent to Bill Schlosser – do you have? -yes.

Monte Hurd – Gary Philips has sent info on wildland fire resources and capabilities for USFS.

Monte Hurd: repeater locations should be included on the map. Sturgill Lookout (near middle of County), Lookout Mtn. (in Oregon, covers the west side), and Indian Mtn. in Adams Co which services Council and Cambridge.

### **Communications**

Basically in good shape. FS is on narrow band. System needs to be tested

Possible repeater funding for Snake River Canyon area (Sturgill Cr.), currently three in the area.

Weiser area has several, not a problem

Place repeater location on map (Commissioner)

Always going to have some “black holes” behind canyons, buttes, etc.

Cuddy Mountain has eliminated many black spots

Satellite phone in Midvale area would be helpful or a cell phone tower

Most districts are happy with amount of radios, some extra like always, would be helpful—would they have to be project 25 radios—probably

All fire departments use clear text

### **Fire District Maps**

Need to bring map next time with suggested changes and Midvale has not seen the map yet  
Section south of rural district down to county line has no protection, would like to set up a meeting, near Weiser rural, tried a previous annexation, will point out on map at next meeting

### **Water Storage**

Water tenders, ponds and dry hydrants (prefer dry hydrants—easier to access)

Need 4,000 and 5,000 gallon, like Indian Valley has, more reservoirs between Midvale and Weiser

Need more tenders, the current is under power and slow, need a newer one

Cambridge would like a water tender and needs a fire house, station room for Weiser Rural Fire, more capable equipment, Midvale would like to finish station, currently shell, good place for cistern / dry hydrant need bathroom facilities.

### **Firefighters**

training, currently doing twice a month, both structural and wildland, BLM is giving wildland fire along with SRV fire chiefs

Weiser rural, 30 volunteers, spread out especially during the day, pay \$7.00/hr which is less than they make at their jobs, recently took out small life insurance policy(\$700.00/yr) fill in the gap of a non fire related death  
Keeping them is easy, getting new ones is hard, average age is 55 in Midvale, budgets won't allow for payment,  
City fire is paid once a month, workman's comp is based on the \$30 dollar small amount of the fire  
Some states and communities use tax breaks for volunteer fire fighters, commissioner said may be hard  
Junior FF Program- training drills, teenagers can participate, Weiser Rural, Weiser City.

#### **Misc.**

Midvale-can't get tender over some bridges, are under-rated. Bridge weights need to be posted.  
Need better addressing, post where you can see. Make an ordinance where you are required to have a visible address.

#### **Infrastructure:**

Page 11, are there other issues? Yes. Highway 71 – recreation, RV, Motor homes, camping, ATV. BLM – sand dunes area, Steck Park.

#### **Community Assessments:**

Midvale: failed to mention 70% of district. Only looked at and took pictures of Midvale.  
Largest area is along lake. Terribly large district, 500 sq. miles. Luckily only sparsely populated.  
Crystal – now called the Cove area – Mann Creek Area is more a designated community than Crystal. **Delete** Crystal and **add** Mann Creek.  
Page 5 – Weiser Community Assessment- Should read the Weiser community is protected by the City of Weiser Fire Department/Weiser Area Rural Protection District #1.  
Page 5-“sport burners” –change to maintenance burning.  
Page 2 – no burning May 10 –October 20.

#### **Misc Comments:**

Audience – Loraine: don't want Feds involved. The County has good personnel to take care of mitigation.  
Search and Rescue person- would like a map showing topo and gridlines to navigate with GPS. Wants coordinates on map.  
Karson: Has all the resource and capabilities info for Midvale.

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#### **February 11, 2004**

Review of the edits to the DRAFT document

### **2.2.4 Public Meetings**

Public meetings were held during the planning process, as an integral component to the planning process. It was the desire of the planning committee, and the Washington County Commissioners to integrate the public's input to the development of the fire mitigation plan.

Formal public meetings were held on October 1, 2003, in Cambridge, Idaho, and on October 2, 2003, at Weiser, Idaho. The purpose of these meetings was to share information on the planning process with a broadly representative cross section of Washington County residents.

Both meetings had wall maps posted in the meeting rooms with many of the analysis results summarized specifically for the risk assessments, location of structures, fire protection, and related information. The formal portion of the presentations included a PowerPoint presentation made by Project Director, Dr. William E. Schlosser. During his presentations, comments from committee members, fire chiefs, and others were encouraged in an effort to engage the audience in a discussion.

It was made clear to all in attendance that their input was welcome and encouraged, as specific treatments had not yet been decided, nor had the risk assessment been completed. Attendees were told that they could provide oral comment during these meetings (which was recorded by the County Fire Plan Facilitator Keith Izatt and are summarized below), they could provide written comment to the meetings, or they could request more information in person to discuss the plan. In addition, attendees were told they would have an opportunity to review the draft plan prior to its completion to further facilitate their comments and input.

The formal presentations lasted approximately 1½ hours and included many questions and comments from the audience. Following the meetings, many discussions continued with the committee members and the general public discussing specific areas, potential treatments, the risk analysis, and other topics.

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#### **Washington County Fire Plan**

#### **Public Meeting Minutes**

**October 1, 2003 7:00 PM**

#### **Washington County Fairgrounds Exhibition Hall**

Presentation from Dr. Schlosser summarized the National Fire Plan, FEMA, and the Statewide Implementation Strategy being followed in this planning effort. He illustrated the wildfire hazard profile for Washington County and a risk assessment putting wildfire in the context of Washington County past losses. Specific community assessments were discussed along with potential mitigation activities being proposed in the county. The status of fire fighting resources and capabilities were presented and discussed.

#### **Public Questions**

- Will the BLM and Forest Service use dozers more?
- Where have wildfires hit this county the hardest?
- Why does FEMA have the right to tell us how to build our homes?
- Is grant money available to implement treatments?
- Is grant money available to landowners for bridge improvements?
- I thought the county took care of our bridges!?
- Who is responsible to implement all of this?

#### **Roster of people present at meeting:**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Organization:</b>
Keith Izatt	Washington County Fire Plan
Steve Domby	Washington County Disaster Services
Dean Page	Cambridge Fire Department (Fire Chief)
Roy Mink	Washington County Commissioner
David Craig	Midvale Fire Department
Karson Craig	Midvale Fire Department (Assistant Chief)
Loraine Carr	Property owner (Washington County)
Russ Manwaring	West Central Highlands RC&D
Monte Heard	Forrest Service (FMO)
Brian Sines	Forrest Service (Assistant FMO)
John Sachtjen	Cambridge Fire Department

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Cecelia Sachtjen	Property owner (Cambridge)
William E. Schlosser	Northwest Management, Inc., Presenter

### **Methods of advertising this meeting**

Public notices placed in the Weiser Signal American Newspaper (The only newspaper published in Washington County)

Flyers-posted in Cambridge, Midvale and Weiser

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## **Washington County Fire Plan**

### **Public Meeting**

**October 2, 2003 7:00 PM**

### **Washington County Commissioners Chambers**

Presentation from Dr. Schlosser summarized the National Fire Plan, FEMA, and the Statewide Implementation Strategy being followed in this planning effort. He illustrated the wildfire hazard profile for Washington County and a risk assessment putting wildfire in the context of Washington County past losses. Specific community assessments were discussed along with potential mitigation activities being proposed in the county. The status of fire fighting resources and capabilities were presented and discussed.

### **Public Questions**

What is the RC&D?

-Is it a federal or state agency?

Where does the funding for this project come from?

-Is this federal money?

Does the BLM run this project?

Is the BLM doing this project to their lands?

Where is the BLM getting this money?

Why do us taxpayers have to pay for people that build where they should not?

Is there anything drafted up?

Will the landowners be involved?

Why are the roads taken out and re-contoured so that you can't go back in and fight fire?

Will we be able to have more public meetings since our commissioners have not informed us?

Can you explain the word treatment?

-Why did the BLM take the cattle off? We never had fires, now we have fires.

-Why not get the cows and sheep back? It would help the economy.

Can the public change the proposal?

Where did the background information come from?

You said we have no choice. We have to do what (you) have already decided?

Can any future commissioners cancel this program?

What other organizations are involved? Is FEMA and Homeland Security involved?

FEMA was late. Where was FEMA? (Regarding recent hurricanes)

This plan has to be compatible to the national fire plan, where do we get a copy of that plan?

Can we look at other counties fire plans?

How many people will this employ?

Why are you taking away from our local volunteer fire departments?

Why isn't the BLM stopping the ATV's? They cut my fence. Why can't you put this in your plan?

What is the difference between rangeland and wildland?

Is the forest service getting away from 'burn baby burn'?

Why can't we burn noxious weeds?

How are you going to get around the environmentalists that got the cattle off in the first place?

Are they going to make us fence the streams?

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How are you going to handle the steep slopes down on the Snake River that the campers have messed up?  
Why wasn't the survey easier to understand?  
Why are the feds changing the way they handle the forests?  
Do you have any literature?  
Can we get copies of the maps?  
Can we photograph the maps?  
How accurate is this ownership map?  
Why didn't we have an intermission?  
Why didn't the volunteer fire fighters do some of the leg work for free? When the government spent our dollars to do it?  
How much wages are they taking away from us?  
Why is FEMA blackmailing us?

#### **Methods of advertising this meeting**

Public notices placed in the Weiser Signal American Newspaper (The only newspaper published in Washington County)

Flyers-posted in Cambridge, Midvale and Weiser

#### **Attendees**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Community/Entity</b>
Betty Woods	Weiser
Ed Woods	Weiser
Robert Peters	Weiser
Bud Fisher	Weiser City Fire Department (Chief)
Nate Marvin	Weiser Rural Fire Department (Chief)
Esther Smith	Weiser
Mark Jurry	Weiser
Rex Winegar	Weiser
Susie Moyle	Weiser
Unreadable Signature	Weiser
Brian Sines	Forrest Service, Weiser (AFMO)
Lorraine Carr	Weiser
Ronald Pound	Weiser
Diana Thomas	Washington County Commissioner
Steve Domby	Washington County Disaster Services
Keith Izatt	Washington County Fire Plan Coordinator
William E. Schlosser	Northwest Management, Inc., Presenter

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#### **2.2.4.1 Public Document Review**

Sections of the Washington County Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan were provided to the Committee members in December of 2003 (as they were completed). Specifically, community risk assessments and the summary of the Resources and Capabilities information were provided to committee members. Due to scheduling complications surrounding the holidays, the committee meeting to discuss these draft sections was held in January 2003. The committee provided comment and revisions to these sections of the document at that

meeting. The revisions were included in a DRAFT Washington County Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan presented to the committee on February 11, 2004. This document was made available to the members of the planning committee and others to obtain a first round of edits, modifications, and enhancements.

On February 25, 2004, members of the planning committee met to discuss changes to the Washington County Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan DRAFT. Many positive and constructive comments were made to the DRAFT document. All of the proposed changes were entered into the DRAFT document which was given the date of DRAFT: February 27, 2004. This version of the plan was distributed on March 1, 2004, to the County Courthouse and county libraries for public review. A press release indicating the public review process was advertised in the local newspaper.

The Public Review period was extended from the March 12 date to March 30. Edits were collected and entered into the plan. The County Commissioners Office and the Emergency Coordinator's office provided additional edits. Once the changes were made to the plan, the County Commissioners requested that the plan be once again offered for public review from May 10 through June 25. Ten copies of the plan's main document and appendices were distributed in the county, along with a press release in the Signal American informing the public about the additional public review period.